



TO: The Honorable Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: David H. Hamilton *David H. Hamilton*

SUBJECT: Master Plan Amendment: Trocaire College, Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) Program in Veterinary Technology

DATE: July 3, 2024

AUTHORIZATION(S): *Donna M. ... Betty ...*

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision (Consent)

Should the Board of Regents approve the master plan amendment for Trocaire College in Buffalo, New York, to offer an A.A.S. program in Veterinary Technology?

Reason for Consideration

Required by State Statute.

Proposed Handling

This question will come before the full Board at its July 2024 meeting where it will be voted on and action taken.

Procedural History

Trocaire College seeks approval of a master plan amendment to offer an A.A.S. program in Veterinary Technology. A master plan amendment is needed as this would be the institution's first program in the agriculture disciplinary area.

Background Information

According to Office of the Professions records, 359 veterinary technician licenses were issued in 2023. Currently, there are 12 programs (9 at the associate level; 3 at the bachelor's level) registered in New York as leading to veterinary technician licensure. Before Medaille University was closed in 2023, the University's Buffalo Campus offered A.A.S., A.S., and B.S. programs in Veterinary Technology (including a distance education option for the A.A.S. program). State University of New York College of Technology at Delhi became the teach-out partner and added the distance education option to its A.A.S. program.

On December 20, 2023, Trocaire College submitted a proposal to offer an A.A.S. program in Veterinary Technology in the standard format and the distance education format. The proposed program is aligned with the College's mission—to empower students toward personal enrichment, dignity, and self-worth through education in a variety of professions and in the liberal arts. The College has historically emphasized hands-on, experiential learning in association with programs of study concentrated in the healthcare fields. A distinct focus of the College has been the connection between its academic programs and the world of work. Many of the College's existing programs (e.g., Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Echocardiography, Massage Therapy, Medical Assistant, Nursing, Practical Nursing, Radiologic Technology, Surgical Technology, etc.) prepare students for professional careers and licensed occupations.

The proposed program requires completion of 67 credits, which can be completed in four semesters. The curriculum is designed to align with the American Veterinary Medical Association Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities (AVMA-CVTEA) standards. Didactic courses total 64 credits and include the following courses: Animal Anatomy and Physiology, Microbiology, Laboratory Animal Care, Parasitology, Pharmacology, Large and Small Animal Disease and Nutrition, Diagnostic Imaging, Clinical Techniques, Dentistry, Surgical Nursing and Anesthesia, Exotics, and Pathology, with associated labs. The curriculum includes 3 credits (234 clock hours) of clinical experience. In addition, students are required to obtain 40 hours of experience working directly with animals before progressing to the second semester.

Applicants for the program must provide evidence of completing high school or equivalent education. The majority of students enrolling in this program are expected to be full-time students and to reside in the Western New York region. Students may be first-time in college or may have had previous college experience. In the original proposal, the College indicates that projected enrollment during the first year is 48 students for both the standard and distance education formats, with projected total enrollment of 160 students by year 5. It is expected that the composition of students in the proposed program will mirror that of the current student body: 84% female, 47% White, 28% Black/African American, 8% Hispanic, 3% Asian, 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, 1% two or more races, and 12% unknown.

Trocaire College will utilize the main campus and its current extension center in Williamsville, New York, to offer the proposed program. The College has made a substantial investment (over 5.2 million dollars) in renovating and expanding its extension center. The new construction includes a Surgery Suite, Sterile Processing Room, Surgery Prep Room, Dental Lab, Radiology Lab, Vivarium, Dog Ward, Cat Ward, Pharmacy Room, Labs, and Laundry. In addition to the facility capital investment, a large initial investment in new equipment has been made to support the program. The program space will be electronically isolated via card-swipe systems from other programs offered at the site to provide maximum security and safety for the animals and students. The extension center has existing classroom and meeting spaces and is well-equipped with modern information technology infrastructure.

The institution has hired five full-time faculty; two are licensed veterinarians and three are licensed veterinary technicians. All faculty has previous experience directing study in a Veterinary Technology program at the associate level offered in both standard

and distance education formats. An additional licensed veterinarian will serve as the on-site attending veterinarian. The library includes a large selection of veterinary technology specific physical books and printed materials. The College has budgeted for subscriptions to digital databases and access to eBooks specific to the Veterinary Technology program. The program has received support letters from over 60 clinical sites located both within and outside of New York State.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook projects job growth of 21 percent from 2022 to 2032, with 14,800 openings for veterinary technologists and technicians projected each year, on average, over the decade¹. In New York State alone 5,220 veterinary technologists and technicians were employed in May 2023, with an annual mean wage of \$ 55,540².

Department Review: Department staff reviewed the application materials, completed a site visit on May 8-9, 2024, and determined that the proposed program meets the standards of registration as set forth in the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

Canvass Results: On May 14, 2024, a canvass was conducted of all institutions in the Western Region and all institutions offering Veterinary Technology programs in New York. Niagara County Community College supported the proposed program. Objections were raised by State University of New York College of Technology at Alfred (approximately 85 miles away in the region) and State University of New York College of Technology at Delhi (approximately 250 miles away).

Trocaire College engaged in multiple rounds of correspondence with each objecting institution in an effort to address concerns. The primary remaining concern is that the need for licensure qualifying Veterinary Technology programs is met by the existing programs and adding a new program in both formats will have an adverse impact on the enrollment and viability of existing programs. In response to this concern, Trocaire College modified its enrollment projection and will cap the enrollment of new students in both modalities each year at 48; the College will adopt a collaborative approach in its recruitment process and will refer students to the objecting institutions, if it is a better fit for the students. In addition to citing the projected growth of this profession and the support for the proposed program from over 60 sites, the College stated that it will enroll different types of students since it is a different type of institution; and prior to its closure, Medaille University enrolled approximately 300 students in its licensure qualifying Veterinary Technology programs; the number of students that the proposed program will enroll is significantly lower than that of the closed Medaille University programs.

Related Regents Items

Not applicable.

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/veterinary-technologists-and-technicians.htm>;

² <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes292056.htm#st>

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents take the following action:

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approve the Master Plan Amendment for Trocaire College to offer the A.A.S. program in Veterinary Technology with an enrollment cap of 48 new students combined for both the standard format and the distance education format.

Timetable for Implementation

If the Board of Regents approves the master plan amendment, the Veterinary Technology program will be registered.